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New York

President:	Sir Emyr Jones Parry	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Sow
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Atieh
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

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03-53426 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Guinea-Bissau in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedures.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 25 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Angola to the United Nations which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to request that His Excellency, Mr. Jose Ramos Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and Special Envoy of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) to Guinea-Bissau, take part, under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, in the open briefing on Guinea-Bissau scheduled for 29 September 2003."

That letter has been issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2003/917.

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jose Ramos Horta.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I extend a warm welcome on behalf of the Council to Mr. Jose Ramos Horta and invite him to take a seat at the Council table.

The Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Tuliameni Kalomoh, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kalomoh.

Mr. Kalomoh: This briefing follows my briefing to members of the Security Council on 15 September 2003, one day after the coup d'état led by General Verissimo Correia Seabra was staged in Bissau. Today, I would like to update the Council on the main developments since that time.

Members of the Council are well aware of the volatile political and socio-economic situation reigning in the country before the coup d'etat. That situation was characterized by, among other things, severe financial problems; weak State structures that were virtually incapable of providing minimal services to the population; increasing rule by decree by former President Kumba Yala after he had dissolved the National Assembly; institutional instability caused by frequent changes of prime ministers and ministers by the President; a dire economic situation; and high social tensions caused by, among other things, the huge backlog of salary arrears. In a word, we had all the indicators of a country in a pre-conflict situation.

Members will also recall that the military officers who staged the coup d'état on 14 September 2003 stated that their action was motivated by the need

> "to re-establish the authority of the State, to rid the public administration of partisanship, to establish transitional Government to include all national political orientations and to create the foundations for the next general elections".

Immediately following the coup, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) launched facilitation/mediation efforts and, with the active support of the presidency of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, helped reach, on 17 September 2003, an agreement between President Yala and the military contingent that staged the coup. The agreement provided for the return of the armed forces to the barracks, the resignation of President Yala, the establishment of a Transitional Government of

National Unity led by a civilian, and the holding of general elections. On the day of the signing of that agreement, President Yala resigned.

On 18 September 2003, President Kufuor of Ghana, Chairman of ECOWAS, and his Nigerian and Senegalese counterparts visited Bissau to facilitate a consensus among the main stakeholders on the basic transitional mechanisms. Subsequently, the military agreed that the interim President would also be a civilian. In the meantime, a 16-member Ad Hoc Technical Commission, which included representatives of all political parties and of civil society, as well as religious and traditional leaders, was established to elaborate a transitional charter.

On 23 September 2003, the Military Committee nominated Mr. Henrique Rosa, an economist and the former Chairman of the National Electoral Commission during the 1994 elections, as transitional President. Artur Sanha, the former Minister of the Interior and the current Secretary-General of the ruling Partido da Renovação Social, was nominated as transitional Prime Minister. While Mr. Rosa's nomination was received favourably by all stakeholders, the appointment of Mr. Sanha, opposed by most of the political parties, has proved to be highly controversial.

After two weeks of almost continuous negotiations, often accompanied by high tension, on 28 September 2003 the Political Transitional Charter was formally agreed in Bissau by the Military Committee for the Restoration of Constitutional and Democratic Order, 23 out of the 24 recognized political parties, and the organizations of civil society. It was formally adopted and signed at a meeting attended by the entire Military Committee and political party and civil society representatives. The signing ceremony was also attended by representatives of the diplomatic community in Guinea-Bissau.

The Political Transition Charter defines itself as the instrument whereby the process of return to constitutional normality is to be guided. It lists the organs of the political transition as the Transitional President of the Republic, the Military Committee for the Restoration of Constitutional and Democratic Order, the National Transition Council and the Transitional Government. The Military Committee, whose mandate ends with the transition period, is defined as the consultative organ for the Transitional President. The National Transition Council is defined as the political monitoring organ of the other organs and therefore fulfils the role of a parliament during the transition. The Council is to be chaired by the Chair of the Military Committee. It includes all the members of the National Transition Council, one representative of each political party, and eight representatives of civil society — 56 in all. The Prime Minister is to be the head of the Transitional Government.

No dates have been fixed for the elections, but the Charter states that legislative elections should be held within six months of the signing of the Charter, that is, by 28 March 2004. At that time, the National Transition Council and the Transitional Government will cease to exist and will be superseded by the elected Peoples' National Assembly and a new Government. The presidential elections are to take place within one year of the swearing-in of the elected deputies. In other words, the transitional presidency shall last a maximum of 18 months.

Yesterday, 28 September, Mr. Henrique Pereira Rosa was sworn in as Transitional President and Mr. Antonio Artur Sanha as Transitional Prime Minister. Members of the National Transition Council also took their oaths of office.

In his acceptance speech, Mr. Rosa stated that he saw his role as that of a compass providing a check on the overall direction of the process. He also expressed gratitude for the support and understanding of the international community, including that of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau, and said that he wanted the international community to accompany Guinea-Bissau so that urgent help could be provided to its people.

In conclusion, let me say that the political class, the military and the organizations of civil society in Guinea-Bissau seem to have pulled back from the brink and have reached a consensus solution for the transition. We view that as a welcome move. There now seems to be an atmosphere of give-and-take, which augurs well for the immediate future. But serious social and economic tensions persist, and they will require careful management by the leaders of Guinea-Bissau. The urgent task for the international community is to help ensure a successful transition by responding as generously as possible to economic and budgetary needs of the Transitional Government.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Jose Ramos Horta, Special Envoy of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries.

Mr. Ramos Horta: I have appeared before the Security Council on numerous occasions in the past, but on another subject matter, namely, the situation in my country. This is the first time that I participate in a discussion pertaining to an issue other than my own country. I do so with a sense of friendship and solidarity with the people of Guinea-Bissau, with whom we share centuries of common history.

It was with a sense of humility and weighty burden that I accepted the responsibility bestowed upon me by my colleagues, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, meeting in Coimbra in July 2003 to act as Special Envoy in assisting with the preparations for elections scheduled for 12 October and to promote national dialogue in Guinea-Bissau in order to ensure that the elections are held in a climate of tranquillity and faith in the system.

I spent a total of one week in Guinea-Bissau, where I met with the now former President Kumba Yalá, many Government ministers, all parliamentary leaders, all the top leaders of the armed forces, the police, the diplomatic corps — in particular the representatives of Portuguese-speaking countries and of Guinea-Bissau's neighbours — church leaders, the private sector, union leaders, students and academics. I had two private discussions with President Kumba Yalá. The day I left Guinea-Bissau, 16 August, I left without the certainty that I had wanted to obtain, namely, that there would be no military intervention. In my discussions with all political parties, members of the church — including protestant and Muslim leaders — and the private sector, I encountered a general, profound disappointment with the governance of Guinea-Bissau. In addition, everyone had the expectation that there should be changes.

Even though President Kumba Yalá assured me in my private discussions with him that he would honour whatever result the elections produced, were the elections to be held on 12 October they would not necessarily produce a better relationship between the presidency and a new Parliament. Instability would therefore continue. I left Guinea-Bissau with the conviction that military intervention would take place in a matter of days, that is to say, that such an eventuality was not a question of "if" but, rather, a matter of "when".

It seems that the military intervention that brought down President Kumba Yalá was welcomed by all of Guinea-Bissau's society. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries — like the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the international community — regretted the event that brought about the changes in Guinea-Bissau. However, as the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs has quite eloquently reported, conditions in Guinea-Bissau were conducive to the situation that did in fact take place. We can only be pleased about the fact that there was no violence, that not a single shot was fired and that there are now formal pledges by those in charge that there will be a return to normalcy and constitutional arrangements and the holding of elections for a new legislature and President.

What I was able to observe in Guinea-Bissau, which was most heart-breaking and very touching, was an extraordinary sense of dignity and pride among the people of Guinea-Bissau. For over a year, thousands of civil servants had been working without receiving their salaries. Soldiers and officers also did not receive their pay for many months. It was raining inside the barracks of the military officers I visited. Ironically, in the West African region, which has been very much shaken by violence, Guinea-Bissau was an oasis of tranquillity and of the absence of hatred, including even towards those who had mismanaged their country. The people of Guinea-Bissau have displayed enormous strength, tolerance and a spirit of solidarity.

I wish to congratulate the United Nations for the outstanding job it has done in Guinea-Bissau as a mediator, conciliator and focal point to which many political leaders of differing persuasions could turn to either voice their complaints against one another or against the Government, and vice versa. That was a very useful role by the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau, whose mandate I hope will be extended. If for no other purpose, the mere presence of the United Nations in Guinea-Bissau as facilitator and conciliator will help create the conditions for elections that we hope will take place.

As has happened in conflict situations, such as those in my country and many other countries, the electoral process is only one step. The country is in

dire need of economic assistance. The Bretton Woods institutions must show more pragmatism and compassion, and maybe even observe a moratorium on payments to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other institutions by the treasury of Guinea-Bissau in order to give the country breathing space while the economy recovers. The country has tremendous potential. God has blessed it with enormous rainfall and enough land. If properly managed and given an opportunity to develop, it could be a breadbasket for the entire region.

I congratulate the Security Council for remaining seized of the matter and keeping the situation under review, as well as for giving the military and others who are today in charge in Guinea-Bissau the benefit of the doubt. I must say that I have the fullest confidence that the people — the military leaders — whom I met in Guinea-Bissau do not wish to remain in power. They are not people who staged a coup in order to gain the spoils of victory. They were genuinely motivated by social and economic conditions that had profoundly affected all of them. They deserve our trust, they deserve credit and they deserve an opportunity.

The Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) will remain closely supportive of the process in Guinea-Bissau, working with the United Nations and Guinea-Bissau's neighbours. I understand that the CPLP Foreign Minister will soon appoint a senior envoy from Angola who will more closely follow the events in Guinea-Bissau on a full-time basis, to provide whatever assistance is necessary. I also remain available at the service of my colleagues in the Portuguese-speaking community within the United Nations to help in whatever limited way I can – as a gesture of gratitude to Guinea-Bissau for its many years of helping us and in gratitude to the United Nations for its many years of helping East Timor. If in some way Timor-Leste can help to contribute to normalization and democratization in Guinea-Bissau, it will be our little bit of reciprocity to the international community.

The President: I thank Minister Ramos Horta for his statement, as well as for what he has been doing.

As there is no list of speakers, I invite those Council members who wish to make comments or to ask questions to so indicate to the Secretariat.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): My delegation would like first of all to thank Assistant Secretary-General Kalomoh for his very comprehensive report. We also appreciate very much the presence here of His Excellency Mr. Ramos Horta. We listened with great interest to his report and we hope that his assessment — a brighter future and the possibility of resolving the issues — proves to be right.

Like the Secretary-General, the European Union and the Security Council itself, we condemned the military coup in Guinea-Bissau, and we support the African Union's stance against the seizure of power by force. In this context, allow me to commend the constructive role that the Economic Community of West African States played in the aftermath of the coup. We expect a prompt return to constitutional order, and take note of the Military Committee's announcement in this respect. We hope that the ongoing electoral process will not be further damaged and that elections will take place as soon as possible.

Together with our partners in the European Union, we remain committed to working with the United Nations, especially the ad hoc advisory group on Guinea-Bissau of the Economic and Social Council, as well as the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies.

We feel that Guinea-Bissau is at a watershed and that there is a real threat that we will see a failing State. The economic situation is desperate. The International Monetary Fund has withdrawn and World Bank projects have been suspended. This situation has to be remedied soon if the people of Guinea-Bissau are to be provided with a future of security and prosperity. We therefore feel that it is absolutely essential to restore constitutional legality and democratic principles.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I would like first of all to commend Assistant Secretary-General Kalomoh for his very comprehensive briefing to the Council this morning. I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting in such a timely manner.

I would like to say right at the outset that I welcome the presence at this meeting of ministers from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). As my colleague Gunter Pleuger said earlier, it was thanks to very effective action by ECOWAS that a crisis was averted.

Furthermore, I would like to welcome the presence of His Excellency Jose Ramos Horta and to

thank him for his very comprehensive briefing. He was in Guinea-Bissau as a special envoy of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) just before the coup, and has been monitoring the situation as a special envoy appointed by his colleagues and ministers for foreign affairs of the Portuguese-speaking countries.

Both regional organizations — ECOWAS and the CPLP — have responded in a timely manner to the crisis, which once again illustrates the importance of regional organizations and the regional dimension of this crisis.

I would like to thank the international community for responding to the situation; the meeting this morning is a very good illustration of the importance attached by the international community to the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

The current state of affairs in Guinea-Bissau is an example of a dangerous cycle in which a situation could spiral out of control, requiring more resources in the future if urgent action is not taken — by the people of Guinea-Bissau themselves first and foremost, but also by the international community. From the briefing this morning we heard that action is effectively being taken by the people of Guinea-Bissau and that they are resolving the problems – the constitutional ones, at least.

As we all are aware, the Council's objective in convening this meeting was to assess the state of preparation for the legislative elections in Guinea-Bissau, which were supposed to take place next month. Those elections were aimed at establishing the institutional order, which is indispensable for dealing with the economic reconstruction of the country. It is therefore essential that everything be done to ensure that the establishment of the transitional Government take place in a smooth manner in order to bring the country back to constitutional order as soon as possible.

In this connection, it is also gratifying to note that the people of Guinea-Bissau and the political leaders have not abandoned dialogue as a way of resolving their differences. We commend that very positive posture on the part of the people of Guinea-Bissau, as consensus on all outstanding issues provides the best guarantee for the political stability of the country.

While we recognize the primacy of the role of the people and the political leaders of Guinea-Bissau, it is also important to stress the responsibility of the international community. The Guinea-Bissau authorities should take the necessary steps to enhance donor confidence, while the donor community should avoid a situation in which its response to the needs of the country is attached to unrealistic conditionalities. That could create a vicious circle and further penalize the country and the people, prolonging the crisis and having a potentially negative impact on the rest of the region. An open mind is therefore necessary to deal with the situation. Our goal should be to break this unproductive cycle.

It is also important that the development assistance stakeholders who have expressed willingness to help Guinea-Bissau, as well as those who have provided assistance to the country, maintain their support, in order to free Guinea-Bissau from political and social economic decline. In that connection, we commend the very positive role played by the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau and the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Mr. Ramos Horta again spoke to us this morning of their positive role in the country. It should be enhanced. Holding a donor conference and contributions to the Emergency Economic Management Fund set up by UNDP could be ways to facilitate the transfer of support to the country.

To deal effectively with the Guinea-Bissau crisis, the support of the Security Council for the efforts of the regional actors is key. ECOWAS, CPLP and the African Union have been playing an important role to avoid further deterioration of the political situation. We, therefore, welcome the decision by ECOWAS and the CPLP to appoint representatives in the country in order to follow up on the situation. We also welcome the appointment by the African Union of a Special Envoy to Guinea-Bissau.

The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau of the Economic and Social Council, the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau and the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa continue to be important tools in promoting peace and in dealing with this crisis. Therefore, the recommendations made by the Security Council and those groups need to be implemented.

I would like to take this opportunity to recall that Guinea-Bissau has valuable human resources. They should be brought into play. They should be able to play a role. I am referring to the diaspora of Guinea-Bissau.

In conclusion, the situation in Guinea-Bissau is one of an emergency. The Security Council needs to address it as such, before it deteriorates into wider conflict with implications that could be much more difficult by far.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to those who gave briefings today on the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

Events in that country are alarming. They are part of a series of coups d'état or coup attempts that have been carried out in recent months in Africa — in March, in the Central African Republic; in June, in Mauritania; in July, in São Tomé and Principe; and on 14 September, in Guinea-Bissau.

When the Security Council mission visited Guinea-Bissau in June 2003, we encountered a heart-wrenching situation. Alienated from his people, President Kumba Yalá was living under an illusion about the future of his country, which has been experiencing a cruel systemic crisis since the civil war. Our contacts with the political opposition, civil society and women's organizations showed that the President was living in a public vacuum. The parliamentary and judicial branches of Government were not functioning. With that "musical chairs" in the Government it was evident that the executive authority was being held together by the personal intrigues of the President and the tolerance of the military. The military's tolerance of this has ended.

Like many States, Russia, along with other members of the Security Council, have condemned the unconstitutional change of power in Guinea-Bissau. However, that is the least of it. We need to understand the reasons for what has happened, which are characteristic of many States in Africa. Despite the various circumstances in each country I mentioned, there is also a characteristic that is common to many African regimes — weakness of Government authority and insufficiently developed democratic foundations. Africans themselves have told us about this.

A Government that has assumed power constitutionally but which then violates the constitution, or simply replaces it, loses its legitimacy. The absence of an operational democratic system of checks and balances does not let society carry out a constitutional change of Government. This problem has remained an issue for more than one decade.

In order to correct this situation, we do not need a great deal of donor assistance. We do not need many years of socio-economic restructuring. We do need political will to affirm the generally recognized standards of democracy and to press for strict compliance with them. References, including those made by President Kumba Yalá, to the peculiar situation in which Africa finds itself in this regard, have not yet been confirmed in the public sphere. On the contrary, in the democratic countries — and there are quite a few of them in Africa — threats to constitutional authority do not exist. The international community must provide appropriate assistance. Active work in promoting democracy is being carried out by the United Nations. The African Union can play a special role in that regard, including within the programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

One characteristic of coups in the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau is that the perpetrators immediately said that they were prepared to hold elections. The Security Council must monitor that, in order to make sure that those promises are not empty words. The people of these countries, enduring the hardships of post-conflict reconstruction, must not become hostage to lawlessness.

I wanted to pose a question to the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Kalomoh.

Mr. Kalomoh, what are the opportunities for the United Nations right now in Guinea-Bissau to support the democratic process and to make sure that the scheduled elections take place on time?

Mr. Cunningham (United States): I also wish to thank Ambassador Kalomoh and Minister Ramos Horta for their very informative presentations, providing us the opportunity to discuss events in Guinea-Bissau. I can be brief because my Government views things very much in the terms that Ambassador Pleuger has already set out.

We are watching developments in Guinea-Bissau closely. We hope that the progress that is being made towards the return of power to civilian leadership will continue. I noted Ambassador Kalomoh's comments about the consensus on the transition and the give-and-take atmosphere that he described. We hope that that would hold and provide a basis for going forward. We encourage rapid steps to constitute a civilian Government and to prepare for democratic elections soon that would be open to broad-based participation. We very much welcome and support the role the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has played and is playing in support of this process, as well as the roles of other members of the international community. The Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, the African Union and the Security Council all share a common interest in restoring civilian leadership and in improving governance in Guinea-Bissau. We will continue to monitor events in the country closely and coordinate with ECOWAS, the African Union and others who are helping, including members of this Council, and hope that we can all see the restoration of the constitutional order quickly.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): I would like to thank Mr. Kalomoh for the update he has given on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and we are also thankful for the briefing provided by His Excellency Mr. Ramos Horta on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries. We commend the work being done by you, sir.

We agree with Mr. Kalomoh that the situation has been pulled back from the brink and we welcome that the major stake-holders seem to have reached a consensus on transitional arrangements. We must heed his note of caution that serious political and social problems persist that require careful management. The need for continued international engagement and generous assistance can not be overstated.

The United Nations has put a lot of time and effort into trying to assist Guinea-Bissau in overcoming the various challenges that it faces. Guinea-Bissau can be termed a test case for the United Nations system, the regional organizations, the donor countries and in fact the entire international community. The success or failure of this venture in Guinea-Bissau is going to be crucial, not only for the people of that country, but for the credibility of the United Nations and its effectiveness to deliver, keeping in mind that Guinea-Bissau is the focus of the attention of two principal organs of the United Nations simultaneously, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

The coordinated efforts of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in the case of Guinea-Bissau were being seen as a window to further strengthening and institutionalizing of the United Nations response, at the intergovernmental level, to the complex crises and situations characterized by interlinkages among security, political, cultural, social, economic and developmental issues. It is important that we should not fail in Guinea-Bissau. It is a small country with a population of only about 1.3 million and its economy, though debilitated, is also small in size. This entails a correspondingly smaller international assistance requirement to fix Guinea-Bissau's problems and to make it self-sustainable.

Extreme poverty and under-development are the main problems; 88 per cent of the population lives on less than one dollar a day. The Security Council mission to Guinea-Bissau reported that wider-spread unemployment, especially among young people, posed a potential long-term threat to peace and stability. Fortunately, and rather surprisingly, the situation has remained calm despite depressing socio-economic conditions and political tensions.

The response of the international community to the peace-building and developmental needs of Guinea-Bissau, spearheaded by the United Nations, should constitute a determined effort based on principles but displaying operational flexibility, as our delegation has said on earlier occasions. The democratic transition has to be supported whole-heartedly with all available resources.

It is surprising to know that a country such as Guinea-Bissau, which is not even able to pay salaries to its functionaries, has been making regular repayments, along with interest, to the International Monetary Fund. We agree with the observation of Mr. Ramos Horta that there is a need to show special consideration and pragmatism by the Bretton Woods institutions to the ability of Guinea-Bissau to make these repayments.

During the public briefing on Liberia on 27 August, the Foreign Minister of Ghana, while drawing the attention of the Council to the situation in Guinea-Bissau, had informed it that the commitments by the international community to provide assistance to Guinea-Bissau were too slow in materializing. And

earlier in June, in a preparatory meeting prior to the Council's West African mission, the then-permanent representative of Guinea-Bissau had pleaded her country's case for international assistance in these words: "Yesterday it was President Nino, today it is Kumba Yalá, tomorrow it will be someone else, but the problems of Guinea-Bissau remain the same". I think we need to reflect seriously on those words and devise practical approaches that could bring real benefit to the people of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Chungong Ayafor (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, in turn, to thank Mr. Kalomoh and Mr. Ramos Horta, the Special Envoy of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, for their very detailed and complimentary presentations on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. Cameroon would like to reiterate its strong disapproval of the 14 September military coup d'état that brought about on 17 September the resignation of President Kumba Yalá. We take note of that resignation and we cannot but take note of the appointment of a civil transitional Government with a civilian president and a civilian prime minister. Our best wishes of success go to the transitional Government.

We are gratified to see that the military junta has refrained from staying in power during the transitional period and has thus opened the way to the rapid restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau and made it possible for an exit from the crisis. I would like to pay tribute to the prompt diplomatic action of the presidents of Ghana and Nigeria, as well as of the president of Senegal, who visited Bissau and persuaded General Correia Seabra, the self-proclaimed President, to hand over power to a civilian Government. We also commend the ECOWAS initiative as well as that of the African Union who sent a joint mission to Guinea-Bissau.

This time, and from now on, the army must keep the promise it made in June to the Council's mission to West Africa not to intervene in the political process and to serve the constitutional authorities with loyalty. The unconstitutional change of power has far from miraculously eliminated the many problems that Guinea-Bissau will have to solve in partnership with the international community if it wishes to consolidate peace in the country.

The socio-economic crisis remains unchanged, with the additional social tensions born from the crisis. More than ever before, Guinea-Bissau requires the assistance of the international community, not only to put the electoral process back on track and to shorten the transitional period, but also to prevent the same causes from producing the same effects once again.

We have no set idea about the duration of the transition but we feel that the required attention must be given both to the proposals in the transitional agreement handed over to the military junta by the transitional committee, presided over by the Archbishop of Bissau, and to the opinion expressed by ECOWAS.

The Council should encourage all concerned parties to continue to carefully follow the situation as it develops — particularly the African Union, ECOWAS, the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau and the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, chaired by Ambassador Gaspar Martins.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, we would like to thank Mr. Kalomoh for his thorough briefing on the current situation in Guinea-Bissau. We would also like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Mr. Jose Ramos Horta, Special Envoy of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, for his excellent statement.

Chile condemns the resolution of the situation in Guinea-Bissau by force and would like to point out that all coups d'état should be repudiated, whether bloodless or violent. We recognize, however, the fundamental role played by the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS). It is a positive sign and shows Africa's desire to take responsibility for resolving its own problems.

Thanks to the intervention and approach of ECOWAS, there has been a positive turn of events after the coup. We welcome the agreements that have been reached, the signing of the Transitional Constitution and the commitments concerning the holding of elections as well as the appointment of an interim President and Prime Minister.

However, as several delegates around the table have said, we believe that it is important for the Security Council to continue to very closely monitor the situation, together with ECOWAS, to help to

prevent the future interim Government from making the same mistakes as the previous Government — in particular, failing to establish conditions for elections by secret ballot that are genuinely democratic, free and timely.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful to Mr. Kalomoh and the Minister from Timor-Leste for their statements on the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

We condemn the coup d'état that took place on 14 September, although we are pleased to see that there were no victims and that former President Kumba Yalá preferred to relinquish his post after a period of political and economic instability.

We appeal to the military authorities to reinstate constitutional rule of law without delay. To this end, we welcome the appointments made yesterday to set up a provisional transitional Government. The restoration of civilian transitional institutions should contribute to the process of national reconciliation and lead to free and democratic elections in the short term and, ultimately, the election of a new President of the Republic.

Finally, we would like to appeal for the provision of emergency assistance to Guinea-Bissau, which is faced with a steadily worsening economic and social situation.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Kalomoh, for his thorough briefing, which gave us much information on the situation on the ground, and the Special Envoy of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, Mr. Ramos Horta, who made a very useful contribution to the work of the Council this morning.

France condemned the coup d'état that took place on 14 September along the lines of the principles established by the African Union. We support the approach taken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and we also believe that it was good that the Security Council affirmed in its previous statement that in such situations regional and subregional organizations could be of great assistance. ECOWAS has shown over the past few years the extent to which its contribution could be useful.

Like those who have preceded me, I believe that, despite the developments that have been described to us as little cause for alarm, it is important that the Security Council should follow the situation closely. We have therefore taken note of the information given us this morning on the resignation of President Kumba Yalá and the transition arrangements. It seems that the path is now clear for restoring constitutional order, but the civilian transitional authorities must do everything that they can to ensure prompt, fair, credible and transparent legislative elections, which have been scheduled for 12 October. In that respect, I would like to take up the question posed by Ambassador Konuzin: It would be good to know what the United Nations can do to help to ensure that the deadline that has been set is met.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): The present consultations on recent developments in Guinea-Bissau come at the right time. My delegation would like to express its gratitude to you, Mr. President, and to thank Mr. Kalomoh for the excellent and thorough briefing that he has just given us on this issue. I would also like to convey my appreciation to Minister Jose Ramos Horta for his interesting statement. I welcome the presence today of our colleague Mr. Cabral, the Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to the United Nations.

Given the precariousness of the situation and uncertainty prevailing in Guinea-Bissau, the Council must assume its principal responsibility for managing conflict and restoring order. We must rise to the challenge by being ever more vigilant and regularly monitor the developments under way to better grasp the situation.

The overthrow of President Kumba Yalá during the night of 13 and 14 of September by a military committee that took it upon itself to claim that it was restoring constitutional order and democracy once again shows that, in Africa, only a collective and firm response by the member States of the neighbouring countries, the subregion and the entire continent is up to the task of opposing a coup d'état and preventing it from succeeding. We therefore welcome the vigorous and prompt action taken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and their member States to safeguard legality and to ensure the gradual restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau.

My delegation also welcomes the positive contribution made by the United Nations and by the

Portuguese-speaking countries to stabilize the situation. President Kumba Yalá's relinquishing of power — which he did, as he said, for the greater good of the people, for peace and for national unity — and the appeal he launched for the immediate establishment of a civilian government of national unity, as well as for the holding of general legislative elections according to an agreed timetable, have been favourably received by the people of Guinea-Bissau, the countries of the subregion and a number of members of the international community.

All of this has helped the negotiations and facilitated the signing of a transitional political charter by the political leadership of Guinea-Bissau.

Relative peace has been restored, and the troops have returned to their barracks. This is a step in the right direction — a step that needs to be consolidated through robust political, economic and social measures that will mobilize the participation and full support of the international community and of aid organizations.

Today more than ever, Guinea-Bissau needs the support of the international community in its efforts at economic and political reconstruction. The failure of President Kumba Yalá, stems, in our opinion, from a chaotic political transition and from disappointing methods of governance and socio-economic results, as well as from a lack of external diplomatic and financial support, as is well known.

Promises were made in many bilateral and multilateral forums, but these have not been translated into facts on the ground. That is why Guinea-Bissau, three years after having embarked on the democratic process, following pluralist elections that were judged free and transparent, which were held on 16 January 2000, remains in the grip of a severe crisis and in a state of near-paralysis. All of this, added to an explosive social situation characterized by excessive arrears in the salaries of civil servants, opened the door for the coup plotters, who used as a pretext the desire to shield Guinea-Bissau from another civil war.

How then can we not agree with the Secretary-General's analysis of the situation, when, in his statement before the Council on justice and the rule of law, he said that

> "elections held when the rule of law is too fragile seldom lead to lasting democratic governance. In addressing these issues, sensitive questions are involved — questions of sovereignty, tradition and security, justice and reconciliation. The task is not simply technically difficult. It is politically delicate." *(S/PV.4833, p. 2)*

The example of Guinea-Bissau is a test case for our Council as to the relevance and validity of the mechanisms that should be put in place during a political transition period in a poor country, one that is beset by many tensions and one that, by the way, does not receive any financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank.

The Security Council should therefore commit itself fully, along with ECOWAS and the African Union, to helping Guinea-Bissau to operationalize the institutional machinery for its transition, with a view to the holding of legislative and presidential elections that will lead to greater stability and therefore to peace and development.

In short, to help a new era emerge in Guinea-Bissau and in West Africa, sustained efforts must be made in order better to coordinate the economic recovery and political reconstruction programmes established by the Economic and Social Council, with the assistance of the development partners and in conjunction with the decisions that will be surely taken by the Security Council in future in order to help consolidate peace and prevent chaos.

We support the mobilization of international support for the civilian transitional authorities and welcome the extension of the mandate of the Peace-Building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau. We hope that this item will be given priority status on our agenda.

Mr. Atieh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation thanks Mr. Kaiomoh, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his detailed briefing on the latest developments in Guinea-Bissau. We also welcome the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste, Special Envoy of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries. We thank him for his detailed briefing.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau is undoubtedly very difficult indeed — politically, economically and socially, following the coup d'état in that country. We believe that the crisis must be dealt with before it turns into a catastrophe whose consequences cannot be contained. We look forward to quick settlement of

current political differences in Guinea-Bissau, and we also look forward to a return to constitutional order and to the holding of elections, we hope, in the next few months.

My delegation supports the role of the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau as well as the important role being undertaken by the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to assist in the stabilization of the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

We support other delegations that have called on the international community to provide emergency economic assistance to Guinea-Bissau in order to enable the country to overcome this difficult transitional period and to prevent further economic and social chaos.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Kalomoh for his briefing on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. I wish also to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Mr. Jose Ramos Horta, Special Envoy of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries. We welcome his presence as well as his presentation.

China is concerned about recent developments in Guinea-Bissau. However, we have noted recent changes in the situation, including the appointment of an interim President and an interim Prime Minister. Representatives from various parties are engaged in talks about matters relating to the transitional period. We hope that the situation will be restored to normal and that the economy will be rehabilitated and developed.

China appreciates the constructive role played by the Economic Community of West African States and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries in finding a solution to the crisis in Guinea-Bissau. The question of Guinea-Bissau demonstrates once again the importance of the development of the economy and the interdependence of political and economic issues. The international community has the obligation to increase its economic and financial assistance to Guinea-Bissau in order to eradicate the difficulties faced by the people so that the country can advance on its path to normalcy and healthy development. China stands ready to work with the United Nations and regional organizations for an early solution to the question of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Like preceding delegations, we would like to warmly thank Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Tuliameni Kalomoh and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos Horta, for the information that they have provided to the Council and for the perspectives they offered for the restoration of democratic order in Guinea-Bissau.

When the joint Economic and Social Council-Security Council mission visited Guinea-Bissau, we took note of the fragility of the process. We spoke with the military authorities, political parties and Government officials, and we noted that the process was fragile and that there were imminent risks.

In our assessment we underline, as other Council members already have, that the economic and social situation of Guinea-Bissau and the conditions in which the Government operated augured serious problems if emergency economic assistance — which was and still is necessary — was not provided.

My Government condemns and regrets the coup d'état that took place in Guinea-Bissau. We believe it is a breach of constitutional order that cannot be considered a starting point for establishing a democratic Government. However, given the critical conditions existing in Guinea-Bissau, we appreciate the efforts of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) to ensure that even in those circumstances, the political process will be restored and the necessary internal agreements and consensus will be reached, enabling the holding of legislative and presidential elections.

We regret that the elections have been delayed beyond the date announced during the Economic and Social Council and Security Council mission. However, we understand that holding those legislative elections, the first step for the restoration of constitutional democracy in Guinea-Bissau, requires the support and participation of all political forces and the full trust of the citizens.

We consider that a basic first task of the United Nations lies in that process. We believe that the United Nations, in conjunction with the African Union, ECOWAS and the CPLP, is the most suited to ensuring in those circumstances that the population and the political parties of Guinea-Bissau view the process of legislative elections as the solution the country

requires. There is much that the United Nations and the international community can do to focus and strengthen the transparency and fairness of the process and to ensure the participation of all citizens. We hope that the United Nations will organize the efforts of the international community in support of, first, the legislative elections and then the presidential elections, to which it now appears the new authorities Guinea-Bissau are committed. We also underline that the international community's vigilance will be indispensable in the coming months to ensure that the difficult economic and social conditions prevailing in Guinea-Bissau do not aggravate the political crisis.

It is very important for the international community to be active in Guinea-Bissau by fulfilling its previously pledged obligations and offers of economic assistance. It should be a priority of United Nations action to help ensure that this economic assistance is in fact delivered and that the instruments of the international community ensure that the economic aid is used for the purposes for which it was intended. We believe that one of the reasons why there has been some delay in the arrival of economic assistance to Guinea-Bissau is because donors were not fully confident that those resources would be put to their intended use. Now, in the new circumstances, we should redouble our efforts so that, with the support of the African Union, ECOWAS and the CPLP, the United Nations can play an important role in ensuring that the resources provided in fact serve the ends for which they were intended.

Guinea-Bissau is part of a region that is going through difficult circumstances. To allow Guinea-Bissau to go adrift at this moment, when it is confronted with the economic and social problems and the political crisis, would perhaps create a more fertile ground for the violence that has unfortunately developed in Western Africa in recent years. During our visit to Guinea-Bissau, we did not fail to notice the great number of unemployed young people lacking dignified living conditions in the economic conditions in their country, who could potentially be victims of violence, leading to situations similar to those the Council saw in neighbouring countries.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that attending to the problems in Guinea-Bissau, from an international perspective of conflict prevention and of resolving the dispute that arose there, calls for coordinated efforts among the agencies involved and the organs working at the regional level and at the level of the United Nations.

My country therefore hopes that the Security Council will continue to work closely with the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau and the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau to ensure the effective work of all actors according to their areas of competence. In our case, that is restoring peace and security; for the Economic and Social Council it is creating conditions conducive to sustainable economic and social development. Working together we will be able to find an answer to the situation prevailing in that country.

The President: As all the comments that I would have made in my national capacity have already been made by other speakers, I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity you have provided us today to participate in this meeting on the situation prevailing in Guinea-Bissau. Indeed, we are indebted to Council members for their interest in our country, a small country in difficulty — I would even say a country in distress. That concern has never wavered, and I believe that the statements we heard this morning strengthen us in the conviction that, with the help of the Security Council and of other members of the international community, we will be able to meet the challenges and to return to what we have always wanted: to re-establish constitutional order in our country and to create conditions for a genuine democracy.

I should like to tell the Council that, by electing President Kumba Yalá in January 2000, the people of Guinea-Bissau had hoped that it would be possible for the country to choose democracy once and for all. The people of Guinea-Bissau had hoped that it would be possible for all the conditions to be created so that participatory democracy could see the light of day in our country. The people of Guinea-Bissau had hoped that it would be possible — through rigorous management of our country's scant resources — to ensure the equitable distribution of those resources.

The circumstances that we are experiencing today are the direct consequence of poor management of the

affairs of State. I should like to thank Mr. Kalomoh, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs with responsibility for Africa, for the information that he was kind enough to bring to the Council's attention. I believe that that information has convinced Council members once again of the gravity of the situation prevailing in our country. But Mr. Kalomoh's briefing also confirmed a factual situation on which the successive reports of the Secretary-General have updated the Council: chronic instability in a country facing grave economic and financial difficulties.

I should also like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Timor-Leste, our great friend and brother Mr. Jose Ramos Horta, who, on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, led a mission in Guinea Bissau. But it was not only in that capacity that he went to Guinea-Bissau. He went as a true brother, as an expert on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and on the psychology of the country's inhabitants. Above all, he went with the intention of understanding how to able to give us the most appropriate advice. That is what he did, and we thank him for it.

I should like to thank all of those who have gained a better understanding of the situation in Guinea-Bissau. I want to mention the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group and the Security Council's Ad hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. I want to mention earnestly and with great gratitude the Group of Friends, under the dynamic leadership of the Ambassador of Gambia, for its unceasing efforts to ensure that Guinea-Bissau is better understood and thus can be adequately assisted.

We are faced with a humanitarian situation. It is true that a coup d'état took place in Guinea-Bissau. We understand all those who — along with you, Mr. President, and other Council members — condemned that act. We deplore the fact that it was necessary to resort to that kind of change in our country. The Military Committee itself recognized that. I saw its communiqué, in which it recognizes that any change of the constitutional change by force is to be condemned. But there are circumstances in which one must do what is necessary to understand what is happening in a country. Ambassador Zinser just recalled what he himself and his colleagues verified in Guinea-Bissau: an instability, a situation whose precariousness was a harbinger of the situation that we are experiencing today.

We must avoid the temptation to make a comparison that is sometimes not so exact. We are not in favour of coups d'état. But I must say that the situation in Guinea-Bissau is not similar to the one prevailing in the Central African Republic. The people of Guinea-Bissau welcomed the coup, because the people of Guinea-Bissau — whose dignity everyone recognizes — had experienced and silently endured unspeakable difficulties. One cannot ask a nation to suffer forever. One cannot ask heads of families who are not in a position to ensure their children's survival to continue to tighten their belts. There are limits. We had hoped that it would be possible for those changes to take place differently.

Today, we are here to ask the international community to understand the situation in Guinea-Bissau and to help us ensure that the changes we wish — and that we will carry out — can be made in calmness and stability, and that all the participants, both political parties and members of civil society — the whole population in general — can participate in the rigorous management of a poor country that wants to get back on its feet. I believe it is perhaps that aspect that should hold the international community's attention. Our decision and our commitment to do everything we can so that the country can get back on its feet, so that we can put the country back on track — that is to say, our commitment to the democratic path — is expressed by the fact that, through consultation, cooperation and in-depth discussion, all the participants and actors in Guinea-Bissau's political life agreed on a transitional charter. The charter is clear and precise; it unequivocally specifies all the steps that must be undertaken for the country to restore the constitutional order that we all want.

The Military Committee for the Restoration of Constitutional and Democratic Order understood that it was necessary and in conformity with international principles for the country to be ruled by civilians. The political parties recognized that it was indispensable for everyone to put the country ahead of their own individual interests. Civil society is now, more than ever, determined to participate in the strict management of the affairs of our country.

It is always difficult to accept this type of change, but I believe that we must, as Mr. Kalomoh has

indicated, make the necessary effort to understand that there is a process of "give and take", which should lead us, in the near future, to a return to constitutional order and democracy.

For now, with your help and that of the entire international community, we hope it will be possible to mobilize the necessary resources, because nobody can be expected to perform miracles. In a country that is suffering, as our country is, a country that finds it very difficult to reestablish itself, it should be easy to understand that it is urgently necessary to provide the necessary financial assistance to this country so that it can be up and running again shortly.

The United Nations, whose role has been under discussion, has established through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) an Emergency Economic Management Fund. If money is added to the Fund quickly, that would help our country meet some of its pressing financial needs right now.

I would like to now thank UNDP and its representative in Guinea-Bissau for his useful and effective role and the courage which he has displayed in the discharge of his duties. I would like to pledge to you, Sir, that we will do our utmost to be worthy of the trust of the international community and that everything will be done, with the assistance of one and all, so that the country will return to true democracy and so that finally we will be able to devote our energies and skills and the scant resources of our country to the disposal of a people that really needs it and which merits help.

The President: I now call on Assistant-Secretary-General Kalomoh to respond to the comments made and to the questions raised.

Mr. Kalomoh: First, let me thank members of the Council for the kind comments made towards our Office in Guinea-Bissau and the excellent work that we are performing.

I wish to respond to a comment made by the distinguished representative of Russia, echoed by the representative of France, regarding the role of the United Nations in ensuring that elections take place as planned. While we all recognize that the primary responsibility for creating an enabling environment lies with the leaders in Guinea-Bissau, I believe it will be expected of us to remain vigilant, to monitor the situation as it evolves and to continue to support the efforts of the national leaders as they forge ahead making preparations for the elections in the time frame they have been given and ensuring that they keep their commitment to the deadline they have established. We also believe that the subregional leaders will continue to support the efforts of the leaders of Guinea-Bissau and to hold them to their commitments keep to the deadlines established to hold the elections.

There are a number of factors that need to be given constant attention. One, obviously, is the support of the donor community to the electoral process. As the Ambassador of Guinea-Bissau has just indicated, the United Nations has made arrangements, through UNDP, in support of the electoral process.

There is another factor that may influence the timing of the election and that is the salary arrears. The Secretariat and the group of friends of Guinea-Bissau and the ad hoc committee of ECOSOC, are trying to mobilize resources from donor countries to support the Government of Guinea-Bissau in paying salary arrears. We recognize that some donors have difficulty in providing budgetary assistance, but we hope they will be flexible and pragmatic to see how they can best respond to these budgetary difficulties.

We take note, with appreciation, of the emphasis made by almost all the speakers on the need for stability. The international community has invested a lot of resources and energy in the electoral process in Africa and elsewhere. But, we have all come to realize that, in and of themselves, elections do not provide stability. It is the sustained efforts to support the development programmes of countries, particularly those countries emerging from conflict, that will guarantee stability. At least, it is in that vein that we believe it is very essential for the international community to remain engaged in support of the people and the Government of Guinea-Bissau to develop its weak State structures, so that they can support the future elected Government. Without that support, as we were reminded by the representative of Pakistan and the representative of Guinea-Bissau, yesterday it was President Vieira, today President Kumba Yalá, tomorrow the next leader. Therefore, in the absence of sustained support, the instability will continue.

To recapitulate, I simply want to say that the United Nations is involved in mobilizing support, we have made some arrangements with UNDP that support the electoral process, and we are satisfied that, should

the conditions for holding elections continue to prevail, we will be adequately prepared to provide that support.

Mr. Konuzin (Russia) (*spoke in Russian*): As I recall, the elections in Guinea-Bissau were scheduled for 14 October and some money was allocated by the donors to prepare for these elections. I am interested in knowing whether you have some information, whether this money actually reached its destination and has it begun to be spent? Has there been some preparatory work for the elections, such as the registration of voters? Is more money needed to prepare for the elections?

I understand that it may not be possible to provide an immediate reply today, but I would be very grateful to the Secretariat if, the next time we receive a briefing on this subject, it could provide a rather detailed account of how the United Nations and its agencies are participating in the democratic process in Guinea-Bissau and of what means are available and what resources are required.

Mr. Kalomoh: If elections were held on 12 October, we would have the necessary resources to support them. I should say that that we have received generous pledges. Some have been redeemed and some have not because of the postponement uncertainties. We have made arrangements to ensure that resources provided for the elections have been managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and therefore respond to the legitimate concerns of the donors that they might not be used for the purposes for which they were given.

We promise that we will provide details about the role we are playing and which fields of society we are providing with assistance when we next brief the Council. We have, however, been satisfied with the response of the donors and with the management of resources within the UNDP office in Guinea-Bissau.

The President: The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.